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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0836
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RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 0014
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 0406
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0383
RUEHLC/AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE 0132
RUEHBZ/AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE 0119
RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0231
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0222
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 0096
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0393
RHMFISS/AFRICOM
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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/C SSARDAR, MASHRAF, SLOPEZ, KWYCOFF
PARIS FOR RKANEDA
LONDON FOR PLORD
AFRICOM FOR KOCH

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [CT](#)
SUBJECT: REBELS ATTACK KABO AND BATANGAFO IN NORTHWESTERN CAR

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In the early morning of Saturday, 21 February, elements from the FDPC (Democratic Front of the Central African People), a group that had signed a peace treaty with the Central African Government in 2008 attacked the towns of Batangafo and Kabo in Northwestern CAR and then departed from them within hours. No casualties have been officially reported, but the Batangafo gendarmerie was sacked and the brigade radio, weapons and ammunition were absconded with. Sources also claim that a military base was attacked and further weapons and ammunition taken. President Bozize is reportedly in Batangafo now after security forces secured the area. While this attack is, by itself, minor it, along with the prison break at Bosambe, and rebel activity at Bria and Ndele, contributes to the mounting evidence that the peace accords of 2008 are collapsing and that activity by new and old rebel groups can be expected to increase. END SUMMARY

¶2. (SBU) The FDPC claims that some 400 of its troops attacked the town at 0500 on 21 February 2009. (Post believes the number was more likely 20-30.) Much more troubling are reports that previously demobilized ex-combatants of the FDPC have rejoined the group. The FDPC, lead by General Abdoulaye Miskine, who is currently in Libya with his new political ally, Abakar Saboun of the MLCJ (Movement of the Central African Liberators for Justice), has rejected the national peace talks of late last year and is believed to be agitating for further concessions from the Central African Government. The FDPC is also one of the more credible groups to claim responsibility for an attack in early February on Bossembele prison that freed an unknown number of prisoners.

¶3. (SBU) The rebels allegedly took the Batangafo police headquarters by surprise. It is also possible that the location was unguarded at that hour, but post suspects rather that the site was very lightly staffed in any case and that most of the police simply fled. The FDPC did manage to kidnap the police chief of Batangafo for a short time but then released him. More alarmingly, they appear to have secured an unspecific amount of weaponry and ammunition as well as a military radio. No further information is available about the Kabo attack. The FDPC claims two rebels wounded in the incidents and reportedly quit both towns by 1100. The website of the FDPC is:
<http://www.centrafriquefdpc.com>.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: The leadership of the FDPC has recently issued statements from Tripoli and the group is believed to be increasingly an instrument of influence by Libyan President Moammar Qaddafi. President Qaddafi may resent Gabonese President Omar Bongo's preeminent role in the peace process and may be seeking to reestablish his influence in the CAR, greatly reduced since the days of 2001 when Libyan troops kept President Patasse in power.

¶5. (SBU) Given the CARG's inability to respond beyond attacking its own population, a grim picture is developing. The peace accords of 2008, the "Political Dialogue" and the subsequent shallow reshuffling of the government have clearly not addressed demands of all the relevant groups. Post fears that other groups will follow the lead and reject their previously signed peace agreements and that new splinter groups and alliances will form. There is, thus far, little evidence that the CARG has either the ability or even a plan to deal with evolving events.
END COMMENT

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